



**Base on the Original Screen Play by DeWitt Bodeen (1941)
Storyboard for a Graphic Novel Adaptation by ZJC (2026)**

“Even as fog continues to lie in the valleys, so does ancient sin cling to the low places, the depressions in the world consciousness...” ~ Sigmund Freud.

CAT PEOPLE (1942) — Graphic Adaptation

A woman haunted by a mysterious ancestral curse believes that love will transform her into a deadly predator, threatening everyone she holds dear.

Scene 1 — Zoo Promenade (Opening Sequence)

PAGE 1 (6 panels)

Mood: Dreamlike → uncanny → quiet observation

Motif: Eyes, enclosure, watching

PANEL 1 (full-width, horizontal splash)

Blackness.

Two pale, glowing slits—eyes—hover in the dark.

CAPTION (optional):

“Even as fog continues to lie in the valleys...”

PANEL 2

The eyes resolve into a **black panther**, pacing behind iron bars.

Mist drifts across the cage.

CAPTION (optional):

“...so does ancient sin cling to the low places...”

PANEL 3 (narrow panel, rhythmic)

Close on the bars.

The panther’s body passes behind them—fragmented by shadow.

PANEL 4

Pull back:

A young woman (IRENA) sits before the cage on a small stool, sketching.

We still do **not** clearly see her face.

PANEL 5

Close on her hands holding the sketch.
She studies it critically.

PANEL 6

She crumples the paper in her fist.

PAGE 2 (6 panels)

Mood: First human connection

Motif: Gesture, distance, missed connection

PANEL 1

Reveal Irena's face for the first time.
Calm, inward, slightly distant.

PANEL 2

She raises the crumpled paper, looking for somewhere to throw it.

PANEL 3

INSERT: A decorative waste bin shaped like a tree trunk.

PANEL 4

A man (OLIVER) steps into frame, hand extended.

OLIVER:

Yes.

PANEL 5

She looks at him—briefly assessing—then drops the paper into his hand.

IRENA:

Thank you.

PANEL 6

Oliver tosses the paper neatly into the bin.

A small, almost playful gesture.

PAGE 3 (5 panels)

Mood: Lightness vs detachment

Motif: Asymmetry (he engages, she withdraws)

PANEL 1

Oliver smiles, expecting acknowledgment.

PANEL 2

Irena has already turned away, focused on another drawing.

PANEL 3

Oliver lingers, slightly amused, slightly intrigued.

OLIVER:

You won't believe this...

...but I've never known any artists.

PANEL 4

Irena continues working, barely looking at him.

IRENA:

I'm not an artist... not a real artist...

just a sketch artist for fashion drawings.

PANEL 5

She holds up a drawing—but angled so he cannot see it.

PAGE 4 (6 panels)

Mood: Refusal / concealment

Motif: Hidden identity

PANEL 1

Oliver reaches toward the drawing.

OLIVER:

May I see it?

PANEL 2

She smiles—but shakes her head.

PANEL 3

She tears the drawing halfway through.

PANEL 4

The torn drawing falls face-down to the pavement.

IRENA:

No. It's not good.

PANEL 5

Wind begins to stir.

Leaves move across the ground.

PANEL 6 (close, low angle)

The torn paper lifts slightly in the wind.

PAGE 5 (4 panels — slower pacing)

Mood: Revelation (first hint of horror)

Motif: двойность / двойное лицо (dual identity)

PANEL 1

The torn halves of the drawing shift.

PANEL 2

They slide together.

PANEL 3 (REVEAL — hold this panel larger)

The drawing is now visible:

A fashion model—

—but with the face of a **black panther**.

Hands tipped with claws.

PANEL 4

The drawing lifts again in the wind...

carried down the promenade.

PAGE 6 (5 panels)

Mood: Transition into relationship

Motif: Movement / companionship beginning

PANEL 1

Irena folds her stool.

Oliver steps in to help.

PANEL 2

An organ grinder passes between them, playing.

The frame is briefly obscured.

PANEL 3

They gather her things together.

PANEL 4

They begin walking side by side.

A small but meaningful shift.

PANEL 5 (closing panel)

Behind them, in the distance:

The **panther cage**.

The animal watches.

Scene 2 — Street → Apartment Entry

PAGE 7 (5 panels)

Mood: Light, curious, slightly flirtatious

Motif: Parallel movement / two people not yet aligned

PANEL 1 (wide horizontal)

A quiet side street.

Irena and Oliver walk together.

They are close—but not quite in sync.

PANEL 2

Closer on them walking.

Irena looks straight ahead.

Oliver glances toward her.

OLIVER:

Irena Dubrovna... is that a Russian name?

PANEL 3

Irena, still looking forward.

IRENA:

No. I am from Serbia.

PANEL 4

Oliver, lightly persistent.

OLIVER:

Would you mind spelling it?

PANEL 5

Irena turns slightly—just enough to acknowledge him.

A faint smile.

IRENA:

You want to know how to spell my name?

Are you going to write me a letter?

PAGE 8 (6 panels)

Mood: Playfulness / controlled distance

Motif: Invitation withheld

PANEL 1

Oliver, amused.

OLIVER:

I'd like to write you a letter.

PANEL 2

Irena raises an eyebrow slightly.

IRENA:

What about?

PANEL 3

Oliver gestures lightly as he speaks.

OLIVER:

I would say...

"Dear Miss Dubrovna... will you have tea with me?"

PANEL 4

Irena shakes her head—playful refusal.

PANEL 5

Oliver continues, undeterred.

OLIVER:

Then I'd write another letter—

PANEL 6

She suddenly stops walking.

PAGE 9 (5 panels)

Mood: Shift — control reverses

Motif: She leads now

PANEL 1

Irena turns to face him.

IRENA:

Here is my house.

PANEL 2

Oliver, caught off guard, holding her stool.

PANEL 3

She places a gloved hand lightly on his sleeve.

IRENA:

Perhaps... Mr. Reed...

you would like to have tea in my apartment.

PANEL 4

Oliver realizes—smiles.

PANEL 5

He hands back the stool.

OLIVER:

Oh, Miss Dubrovna...

you make life so simple.

PAGE 10 (4 panels)

Mood: Threshold

Motif: Entering interior / entering her world

PANEL 1 (vertical panel)

Exterior of the brownstone building.

Tall. Slightly imposing.

PANEL 2

Interior hallway. Ornate but dim.

They enter together.

PANEL 3

They move toward a staircase.

Oliver looks upward, impressed.

OLIVER:

I never cease to marvel at what lies behind a brownstone front.

PANEL 4

They begin ascending.

PAGE 11 (5 panels)

Mood: Hesitation

Motif: Door / boundary / interior self

PANEL 1

At her apartment door.

Irena inserts the key.

PANEL 2

She pauses before opening it.

Looks up at Oliver.

PANEL 3

Oliver notices.

OLIVER:

What's the matter?

PANEL 4

Irena—slight vulnerability.

IRENA:

I've never had anyone here.

You're the first friend I've met in America.

PANEL 5 (quiet, intimate)

Close on her face.

IRENA:

You might be my first real friend.

PAGE 12 (5 panels)

Mood: Entry into psyche

Motif: Object as omen

PANEL 1

She opens the door.

Interior dimly visible.

PANEL 2

Oliver steps in.

PANEL 3 (focus panel — slightly larger)

Inside the room:

A **stone statue**—

A king on horseback, sword raised, impaling a cat.

PANEL 4

Irena stands just inside, watching Oliver.

Waiting.

PANEL 5

He inhales slightly.

OLIVER:

Mm. Nice.

PAGE 13 (5 panels)

Mood: Sensory / subtle unease

Motif: Smell, atmosphere, unseen presence

PANEL 1

Irena closes the door behind them.

PANEL 2

Oliver glances around.

OLIVER:

Mm. Nice.

PANEL 3

Irena, softly:

IRENA:

That's Lalage.

PANEL 4

Oliver, puzzled.

OLIVER:

Lalage?

PANEL 5

Irena—almost confessional.

IRENA:

The perfume I use.

I like it... perhaps too well.

PAGE 14 (4 panels — slow, atmospheric)

Mood: Transition into twilight interior

Motif: Object + shadow

PANEL 1

Close on the statue again.

Silhouetted against the window.

PANEL 2

Light appears across the street—
the statue sharpens in contrast.

PANEL 3

Pan across the room:

Irena and Oliver sit together, dimly lit.

PANEL 4 (closing panel)

The room in twilight.

Small. Intimate.

But filled with images of cats.

Scene 3 — Irena's Living Room (Tea / Myth / First Confession)

PAGE 15 (4 panels)

Mood: Intimate / suspended time

Motif: Twilight / enclosure

PANEL 1 (wide, quiet)

The living room at twilight.

Shapes barely visible.

Irena and Oliver sit together on a couch.

PANEL 2

Irena hums softly.

Oliver listens.

(No dialogue—let silence work.)

PANEL 3

A sudden stillness—no traffic outside.

PANEL 4 (slight tension)

Oliver turns his head, listening.

OLIVER:

What's that?

PAGE 16 (5 panels)

Mood: First intrusion of the animal world

Motif: Sound → unseen presence

PANEL 1

Irena looks toward the window.

IRENA:

The lions in the zoo.

PANEL 2

Outside: distant city night.

Unseen—but we *feel* the sound.

PANEL 3

Back inside. Irena calm.

IRENA:

Many people complain.

It keeps them awake.

PANEL 4

Oliver studies her.

OLIVER:

And you don't mind it?

PANEL 5 (soft, strange)

Irena—almost serene.

IRENA:

No... I like it.

PAGE 17 (5 panels)

Mood: Unease grows

Motif: Sound becomes identity

PANEL 1

Irena turns slightly away.

IRENA:

Some nights... there is another sound.

PANEL 2

Close on her face—shadowed.

IRENA:

The panther.

PANEL 3

Dark panel—suggestion only.

SFX (small, distant):

SCREAM

PANEL 4

Back to Irena.

IRENA:

It screams... like a woman.

PANEL 5

Oliver lights a match.

The flame illuminates her face briefly.

PAGE 18 (5 panels)

Mood: Light vs dark (literal + symbolic)

Motif: Darkness welcomed

PANEL 1

Irena rises.

IRENA:

I hadn't realized how dark it was.

PANEL 2

She crosses the room.

PANEL 3 (important line — give space)

She pauses, almost savoring the moment.

IRENA:

I like the dark.

It is friendly.

PANEL 4

She turns on the lamp.

PANEL 5 (reveal panel — medium-wide)

The room in full view:

- Cat paintings
 - Drawing desk
 - Panther screen
 - Fireplace
 - The statue
-

PAGE 19 (6 panels)

Mood: Domestic surface / underlying strangeness

Motif: Cats everywhere

PANEL 1

Details montage (small panels):

Framed drawings of cats dressed as humans.

PANEL 2

Another: grotesque cat imagery (Goya-like).

PANEL 3

The panther screen—sleek, predatory.

PANEL 4

Tea remnants on a table.

PANEL 5

Irena clearing dishes.

PANEL 6

Oliver picks up the statue.

PAGE 20 (5 panels)

Mood: Object becomes narrative trigger

Motif: Violence ritualized

PANEL 1

Close on the statue:

A king impaling a cat.

PANEL 2

Oliver, uneasy.

OLIVER:

Who's it supposed to be?

PANEL 3

Irena, turning back.

IRENA:

King John.

PANEL 4

Oliver (slightly amused):

OLIVER:

The Magna Carta and all that?

PANEL 5

Irena—correcting him.

IRENA:

No... King John of Serbia.

PAGE 21 (5 panels)

Mood: Myth begins to surface

Motif: History as personal memory

PANEL 1

Irena takes the statue from him.

PANEL 2

She holds it close—almost reverent.

IRENA:

He freed the people.

PANEL 3

Oliver, still unconvinced.

OLIVER:

Why keep this?

PANEL 4

Irena glances upward—thinking.

PANEL 5

She steps toward the fireplace.

PAGE 22 (6 panels — slower pacing)

Mood: Storytelling / ritual tone

Motif: Fire / confession

PANEL 1

Irena stands near the mantel.

Firelight flickers.

PANEL 2

The statue in her hands.

PANEL 3

She begins:

IRENA:

It is not really a cat...

PANEL 4

Close on her face.

IRENA:

It represents evil.

PANEL 5

Insert (imaginative panel):

Villagers... shadowed... ritual-like.

PANEL 6

Back to present.

PAGE 23 (6 panels)

Mood: Descent into legend

Motif: Isolation → corruption

PANEL 1

Irena:

IRENA:

My village... was cut off from the world.

PANEL 2

Visual insert: isolated mountain village.

PANEL 3

IRENA (caption over image):

They were good... at first.

PANEL 4

The villagers begin to change.

PANEL 5

Dark ritual imagery—suggestion, not explicit.

PANEL 6

Irena:

IRENA:

They worshipped evil.

PAGE 24 (5 panels)

Mood: Violence remembered

Motif: Fire / purification

PANEL 1

Insert: soldiers / King John.

PANEL 2

Execution imagery—stylized, not graphic.

PANEL 3

Flames rising.

PANEL 4

Irena (quietly):

IRENA:

Some were destroyed.

PANEL 5

Close on her eyes:

IRENA:

But some escaped.

PAGE 25 (5 panels)

Mood: Personalization of myth

Motif: Past clinging to present

PANEL 1

She looks directly at Oliver now.

PANEL 2

Silence between them.

PANEL 3

Irena:

IRENA:

Their legend... still lives.

PANEL 4

Oliver steps closer.

OLIVER:

What does it have to do with you?

PANEL 5 (hold this panel)

Irena looks down at the statue.

A haunted expression.

PAGE 26 (4 panels)

Mood: Withdrawal

Motif: Saying too much

PANEL 1

Irena:

IRENA:

The past remains...

PANEL 2

She stops herself.

PANEL 3

A clock on the mantel strikes.

SFX: *CHIME*

PANEL 4

She glances at the time—relieved.

PAGE 27 (5 panels)

Mood: Return to normalcy (surface only)

Motif: Social ritual resumes

PANEL 1

Oliver moves to leave.

OLIVER:

Boys who come to tea can't stay to dinner.

PANEL 2

At the doorway.

PANEL 3

He turns back.

OLIVER:
Tomorrow?

PANEL 4
Irena nods.

PANEL 5
A faint smile—but now ambiguous.

PAGE 28 (closing page — 3 panels)

Mood: Lingering unease
Motif: Watching / distance

PANEL 1
Oliver descending the stairs.

PANEL 2
Irena watching from above.

PANEL 3 (final image — hold)
She remains there.

Still.

Alone.

Scene 4 — Drafting Office (Alice / Kitten / First Triangle)

PAGE 29 (5 panels)

Mood: Order / rational world
Motif: Structure vs instinct

PANEL 1 (wide establishing)
A large drafting office. Clean, geometric, modern.

Workers at illuminated drafting tables.
Ship plans forming across a wall.

PANEL 2

Closer: Oliver at his drafting table, focused.

PANEL 3

Across the room: ALICE MOORE supervises workers placing ship diagrams.

Confident. Efficient. Grounded.

PANEL 4

Commodore Judson watches, pleased.

COMMODORE:

By George... this is going to be our best yet.

PANEL 5

Alice adjusts a plan precisely.

ALICE:

She's got what it takes, all right.

PAGE 30 (5 panels)

Mood: Everyday rhythm

Motif: Human systems / control

PANEL 1

Alice walks toward Oliver's desk.

PANEL 2

Workers continue assembling ship sections behind them.

PANEL 3

Alice pauses—listening.

PANEL 4

Small panel:
A faint sound.

SFX: *mew...*

PANEL 5

Alice looks around, puzzled.

PAGE 31 (6 panels)

Mood: Playfulness begins

Motif: Hidden animal

PANEL 1

Carver looks up too.

PANEL 2

Alice scans the room.

PANEL 3

Another sound.

SFX: *mew*

PANEL 4

They both turn toward Oliver.

PANEL 5

Oliver remains focused on his work—*too* focused.

Feigning innocence.

PANEL 6 (small reveal)

A small box on his desk.

The lid trembles slightly.

PAGE 32 (5 panels)

Mood: Reveal / warmth

Motif: Innocent animal

PANEL 1

The box lid lifts.

A tiny Siamese kitten pokes its head out.

PANEL 2

Alice reacts instantly—delighted.

ALICE:

Ahhh!

PANEL 3

She scoops the kitten up, pressing it to her cheek.

PANEL 4

Oliver watches, amused.

PANEL 5

Alice:

ALICE:

It's a darling! Where'd you get it?

PAGE 33 (5 panels)

Mood: Subtle shift — intention

Motif: Gift / projection

PANEL 1

Oliver:

OLIVER:

Bought it.

PANEL 2

The Commodore joins them.

PANEL 3

He scratches the kitten's head.

COMMODORE:

You're not going to start keeping cats, are you?

PANEL 4

Oliver:

OLIVER:

No... I got it for a friend.

PANEL 5

Carver leans in, grinning.

CARVER:

Which means... our Oliver has a girl.

PAGE 34 (6 panels)

Mood: Triangle introduced

Motif: Language matters ("a girl" vs "girl friend")

PANEL 1

Alice, curious:

ALICE:

A girlfriend?

PANEL 2

Oliver corrects her—subtly but importantly.

OLIVER:

A girl.

PANEL 3

Alice studies him now.

PANEL 4

Alice:

ALICE:

Anybody I know?

PANEL 5

Oliver puts the kitten back in the box gently.

PANEL 6

Oliver:

OLIVER:

Not yet... but I think you'll like her.

PAGE 35 (4 panels)

Mood: Light tone, but undercurrent

Motif: Containment

PANEL 1

The kitten tries to climb out of the box.

PANEL 2

Oliver gently presses the lid down.

PANEL 3

Alice watches him—thinking.

PANEL 4 (closing beat)

The lid closes.

Darkness inside the box.

PAGE 36 (5 panels)

Mood: Office humor / contrast to Irena's world

Motif: Human play vs animal instinct

PANEL 1

Later—Alice and Oliver working side by side.

PANEL 2

Oliver:

OLIVER:

Slide rule?

PANEL 3

No response—Alice is focused.

PANEL 4

He leans close, mock-romantic.

OLIVER:

Mademoiselle... you are so beautiful...

PANEL 5

Alice hands him the slide rule, rolling her eyes.

PAGE 37 (6 panels)

Mood: Workplace comedy / grounding reality

Motif: Rational world dominance

PANEL 1

Alice at water cooler.

PANEL 2

Carver joins.

PANEL 3

Alice sets up a playful bet.

PANEL 4

Carver attempts ridiculous coin trick.

PANEL 5

Oliver dumps paper clips into his trousers.

PANEL 6

Everyone laughs.

PAGE 38 (4 panels)

Mood: Social structure returns

Motif: Order reasserted

PANEL 1

The Commodore enters.

Instant quiet.

PANEL 2

He looks around.

PANEL 3

Carver shifts—paper clips spill everywhere.

PANEL 4

The Commodore dryly:

COMMODORE:

I always wondered what held you together.

PAGE 39 (5 panels — transition setup)

Mood: Foreshadowing

Motif: Worlds about to collide

PANEL 1

Alice turns back to Oliver.

PANEL 2

She watches him more carefully now.

PANEL 3

Alice:

ALICE:

If you like her... she's okay with me.

PANEL 4

Close on Oliver—pleased.

PANEL 5 (final panel — hold)

The box with the kitten again.

Silent.

Still.

Scene 5 — The Gift (Kitten → Rejection)

PAGE 40 (5 panels)

Mood: Expectation / warmth (surface)

Motif: Gift / offering

PANEL 1 (medium-wide)

Outside Irena's apartment door.

Oliver stands with a small box under his arm.

PANEL 2

He rings the bell.

PANEL 3

The door opens.

Irena appears—paint-stained smock, interrupted mid-work.

She smiles.

PANEL 4

Oliver kneels, placing the box down.

OLIVER:

Look, Irena. I brought you a present.

PANEL 5

He opens the box.

PAGE 41 (5 panels)

Mood: First disturbance

Motif: Animal instinct vs human expectation

PANEL 1

The kitten is set gently on the floor.

PANEL 2

Irena crouches, smiling, reaching toward it.

PANEL 3 (shift)

The kitten recoils.

Back arched.

PANEL 4

Close on the kitten—hissing.

SFX: SSSSSS

PANEL 5

Irena freezes—hand still extended.

PAGE 42 (6 panels)

Mood: Escalation

Motif: Rejection

PANEL 1

The kitten spits violently.

SFX: *SPIT!*

PANEL 2

Oliver reacts—surprised.

PANEL 3

He scoops the kitten up quickly.

OLIVER:

Why, you little devil—

PANEL 4

Irena rises, controlled—but something is off.

PANEL 5

She forces calm.

IRENA:

It's all right.

PANEL 6 (quiet, telling)

She looks at the kitten—not with affection, but distance.

IRENA:

Cats don't seem to like me.

PAGE 43 (5 panels)

Mood: Rational explanation attempt

Motif: Denial

PANEL 1

Oliver, confused.

OLIVER:

But this is only a kitten...

PANEL 2

Flashback inset (small panel):

Alice playing with the kitten.

PANEL 3

Back to present.

OLIVER:

It played with Alice.

PANEL 4

Irena smiles—but strained.

PANEL 5

She repeats, softer:

IRENA:

Cats don't like me.

PAGE 44 (5 panels)

Mood: Recovery attempt

Motif: Substitution

PANEL 1

Oliver places the kitten back into the box.

PANEL 2

The lid closes.

PANEL 3

Irena steps closer—touches his arm.

PANEL 4

Her tone shifts—bright, almost too bright.

IRENA:

We could exchange it.

PANEL 5

She looks up at him.

IRENA:

For something else.

PAGE 45 (4 panels)

Mood: Forced normalcy

Motif: Redirecting reality

PANEL 1

Oliver nods.

PANEL 2

Irena turns back into the apartment.

PANEL 3

She moves quickly—almost escaping the moment.

PANEL 4 (hold)

The closed box sits alone for a beat.

PAGE 46 (6 panels)

Mood: Transition → uncanny build

Motif: Animals sensing

PANEL 1 (establishing)

Interior of a pet shop. Calm. Quiet.

PANEL 2

Birds perched. Still.

PANEL 3

A shopkeeper dozing.

PANEL 4

The door opens—Oliver and Irena enter.

Bell rings.

SFX: *TING*

PANEL 5 (instant shift)

Birds suddenly erupt—fluttering, shrieking.

PANEL 6

Monkeys scream, animals panic.

Total chaos.

PAGE 47 (6 panels)

Mood: External confirmation

Motif: Universal animal rejection

PANEL 1

Cages rattling.

PANEL 2

Dogs barking wildly.

PANEL 3

Birds thrashing.

PANEL 4

The shopkeeper startled awake.

PANEL 5

Oliver looks around—confused.

PANEL 6

Irena stands still in the center of it all.

The chaos seems to orbit her.

PAGE 48 (5 panels)

Mood: Displacement

Motif: She does not belong in this space

PANEL 1

Oliver tries to speak—but can't be heard over the noise.

PANEL 2

Irena touches his arm.

PANEL 3

She gestures toward the door.

PANEL 4

They step back outside.

PANEL 5

Instant silence.

PAGE 49 (5 panels)

Mood: Uneasy explanation

Motif: Others notice

PANEL 1

Outside under umbrella.

PANEL 2

Shopkeeper, embarrassed:

SHOPKEEPER:

Animals are... sensitive.

PANEL 3

She glances at Irena—subtle suspicion.

PANEL 4

Irena avoids eye contact.

PANEL 5

Oliver watches her now—*really* watching.

PAGE 50 (4 panels)

Mood: Substitution complete

Motif: False solution

PANEL 1

Back inside briefly—Oliver selects a canary.

PANEL 2

He holds it up for Irena to see through the window.

PANEL 3

Irena smiles—genuine, relieved.

PANEL 4

They leave together under the umbrella.

PAGE 51 (closing page — 3 panels)

Mood: Fragile calm

Motif: Replacement / illusion

PANEL 1

Irena holds the birdcage gently.

IRENA:

He will like me.

PANEL 2

She smiles up at Oliver.

IRENA:

I like to be liked.

PANEL 3 (final image — hold)

The bird in the cage.

Still.

Watching.

Scene 6 — The Visit (Alice Enters Irena's Space)

PAGE 52 (5 panels)

Mood: Social warmth (surface)

Motif: Crossing worlds

PANEL 1 (establishing)

Interior — Irena's living room, afternoon.

Door open.

Alice and Oliver enter.

Irena greets them.

PANEL 2

Irena links arms warmly with Alice.

IRENA:

I think I shall like you very much.

PANEL 3

Alice—slightly surprised by the intimacy.

PANEL 4

They move into the room together.

PANEL 5

Oliver watches—pleased, hopeful.

PAGE 53 (5 panels)

Mood: Polite conversation

Motif: Cats as identity

PANEL 1

Alice looking around the apartment.

PANEL 2

She notices cat imagery.

ALICE:

Ollie says you like to draw cats.

PANEL 3

Irena:

IRENA:

Cats are harder to draw than people.

PANEL 4

Irena gestures toward a painting.

PANEL 5

Cat artwork fills the wall.

PAGE 54 (6 panels)

Mood: Subtle discomfort

Motif: Difference between the women

PANEL 1

Alice laughs lightly.

ALICE:

I tried once. Mine looked like a mouse.

PANEL 2

Irena smiles—but stays serious.

PANEL 3

Irena:

IRENA:

I had to draw them.

PANEL 4

Alice:

ALICE:

I drew boats.

PANEL 5

Irena watches her—studying.

PANEL 6

Silence—small but noticeable.

PAGE 55 (5 panels)

Mood: Exposure

Motif: Inner vs outer self

PANEL 1

Irena gathers a stack of drawings.

PANEL 2

She lays them out before Alice.

PANEL 3 (important reveal)

Fashion drawings—

—but with **cat faces**.

PANEL 4

Alice looks—trying to respond appropriately.

PANEL 5

Oliver watches Alice—concerned about her reaction.

PAGE 56 (5 panels)

Mood: Covering tension

Motif: Social smoothing

PANEL 1

Oliver steps in, shifting tone.

OLIVER:

How about a cocktail?

PANEL 2

Irena brightens—relieved.

PANEL 3

She moves behind the screen.

PANEL 4

Alice gives Oliver a subtle approving gesture.

PANEL 5

The canary begins to sing.

PAGE 57 (5 panels)

Mood: Temporary harmony

Motif: Bird as emotional barometer

PANEL 1

Alice approaches the cage.

PANEL 2

Oliver joins her.

PANEL 3

They listen—smiling.

ALICE:

Listen to her!

PANEL 4

The bird sings—bright, alive.

PANEL 5 (shift begins)

The bird suddenly stops.

PAGE 58 (6 panels)

Mood: Subtle rupture

Motif: Presence disrupts life

PANEL 1

Alice and Oliver exchange a look.

PANEL 2

Irena returns, carrying drinks.

PANEL 3

She hears the silence.

IRENA:

Was the bird singing?

PANEL 4

Alice:

ALICE:

Yes—an aria.

PANEL 5

Irena steps toward the cage.

PANEL 6

The bird shifts away from her.

PAGE 59 (6 panels)

Mood: Pattern repeating

Motif: Rejection again

PANEL 1

Irena leans close, softly coaxing.

PANEL 2

The bird presses itself to the far side of the cage.

PANEL 3

Irena whistles gently.

PANEL 4

No response.

PANEL 5

Irena:

IRENA:

For me... it will not sing.

PANEL 6

Alice watches—uneasy now.

PAGE 60 (5 panels)

Mood: Forced normalcy

Motif: Social ritual resumes

PANEL 1

Irena turns away.

IRENA:

Shall we have our martinis?

PANEL 2

They gather around the table.

PANEL 3

Oliver raises his glass.

PANEL 4

They drink.

PANEL 5 (intrusion)

Off-panel:

SFX: *SCREAM*

PAGE 61 (5 panels)

Mood: External echo of internal state

Motif: Panther = Irena

PANEL 1

Alice and Oliver react.

PANEL 2

Irena, calm:

IRENA:

The panther.

PANEL 3

Oliver forces lightness.

OLIVER:

Here's luck to all of us.

PANEL 4

They raise glasses.

PANEL 5

Alice—quiet, thoughtful.

ALICE:

To all of us.

PAGE 62 (closing page — 3 panels)

Mood: Uneasy equilibrium

Motif: Watching / silent judgment

PANEL 1

The three sit together.

A triangle composition.

PANEL 2

The canary in its cage.

Silent.

PANEL 3 (final image — hold)

The panther screen behind them.

Its painted eyes aligned—watching.

Scene 7 — Evening (Intimacy / First Fracture)

PAGE 63 (4 panels)

Mood: Quiet, intimate, suspended

Motif: Touch / care

PANEL 1 (wide, low light)

Irena's living room at night.

Firelight flickers. Shadows move softly.

Oliver lies stretched on the sofa.

PANEL 2

Irena sits beside him, gently stroking his brow.

PANEL 3

Close on her hand moving rhythmically.

PANEL 4

She looks down at him—soft, absorbed.

IRENA:

Better now?

PAGE 64 (5 panels)

Mood: Comfort / vulnerability

Motif: Domestic closeness

PANEL 1

Oliver, eyes half-closed.

OLIVER:

Much better...

PANEL 2

He relaxes deeper into the cushions.

PANEL 3

Irena continues the gesture—almost hypnotic.

PANEL 4

Oliver:

OLIVER:

Those tables at work...

they give a man a headache.

PANEL 5

Irena listens quietly.

PAGE 65 (5 panels)

Mood: Alice enters the emotional space (indirectly)

Motif: Comparison

PANEL 1

Irena:

IRENA:

Does Alice mind them?

PANEL 2

Oliver smiles faintly.

OLIVER:

She never lets anything bother her.

PANEL 3

Insert (memory panel):

Alice swimming—free, confident.

PANEL 4

Back to present—contrast.

PANEL 5

Irena's hand pauses slightly... then continues.

PAGE 66 (4 panels)

Mood: Transition into stillness

Motif: Breath / suspended time

PANEL 1

Oliver's eyes close fully.

PANEL 2

His breathing deepens.

PANEL 3

Irena watches him.

PANEL 4

Silence fills the room.

PAGE 67 (5 panels)

Mood: Private world

Motif: Possession / devotion

PANEL 1

Irena slides gently from the sofa to the floor.

PANEL 2

She nestles beside him.

PANEL 3

His hand hangs loosely over the edge.

PANEL 4 (intimate, unsettling)

She presses her cheek against his hand.

PANEL 5

She rubs against it—slowly, instinctively.

(Cat-like, but tender.)

PAGE 68 (4 panels)

Mood: Beauty with unease

Motif: Fire / instinct

PANEL 1

Her eyes drift toward the fire.

PANEL 2

Flames flicker—reflected in her eyes.

PANEL 3

Oliver stirs.

PANEL 4

He opens his eyes.

PAGE 69 (5 panels)

Mood: Awakening / awareness

Motif: Seen vs unseen

PANEL 1

Oliver looks down at her.

OLIVER:

Irena...

PANEL 2

She doesn't move away.

IRENA:

Yes.

PANEL 3

He shifts slightly.

OLIVER:

I've been asleep.

PANEL 4

Irena:

IRENA:

I know.

PANEL 5

He studies her—something unusual in the closeness.

PAGE 70 (5 panels)

Mood: Love emerges

Motif: Verbalizing emotion

PANEL 1

Oliver:

OLIVER:

Do you love me?

PANEL 2

Irena—soft, almost a murmur.

(No full speech bubble—just a small one.)

IRENA:

Yes.

PANEL 3

Oliver:

OLIVER:

You know I love you.

PANEL 4

She leans closer.

PANEL 5

Silence—shared.

PAGE 71 (5 panels)

Mood: Turning point

Motif: The kiss (withheld)

PANEL 1

Oliver sits up slightly.

PANEL 2

He reaches toward her.

PANEL 3

Irena withdraws—just enough.

PANEL 4

Oliver, puzzled:

OLIVER:

I've never kissed you.

PANEL 5

She retreats further into shadow.

PAGE 72 (5 panels)

Mood: Cultural contrast / tension

Motif: Norm vs anomaly

PANEL 1

Oliver leans forward.

OLIVER:

People in America...

PANEL 2

He continues:

OLIVER:

When they're in love...

PANEL 3

Close on him:

OLIVER:

They've usually kissed.

PANEL 4

He reaches again.

PANEL 5

Irena pulls away—sharper this time.

PAGE 73 (6 panels)

Mood: Emotional rupture

Motif: Fear of self

PANEL 1

Irena—tense, anguished.

IRENA:

I love you.

PANEL 2

Oliver startled by intensity.

PANEL 3

She collapses against him—sobbing.

PANEL 4

Close on her face—distressed.

PANEL 5

Oliver tries to comfort her.

PANEL 6

She pulls away again.

PAGE 74 (6 panels)

Mood: Confession

Motif: Love = danger

PANEL 1

Irena:

IRENA:

I've lived in dread of this moment.

PANEL 2

She turns away.

PANEL 3

IRENA:

I kept myself away from people...

PANEL 4

Close on her hands—tense.

PANEL 5

IRENA:

I never wanted this to happen.

PANEL 6

Oliver, trying to ground her:

OLIVER:

But you love me.

PAGE 75 (5 panels)

Mood: Irreconcilable conflict

Motif: Desire vs fear

PANEL 1

Irena:

IRENA:

I do.

PANEL 2

Oliver reaches again.

PANEL 3

OLIVER:

Then come here.

PANEL 4

She recoils—almost instinctively.

PANEL 5

IRENA:

No.

PAGE 76 (5 panels)

Mood: The myth becomes personal

Motif: Naming fear

PANEL 1

Irena—voice trembling:

IRENA:

I've fled from the past...

PANEL 2

IRENA:

From things you could never understand...

PANEL 3

Shadow overtakes part of her face.

PANEL 4

IRENA:

Evil things.

PANEL 5

Oliver watches—serious now.

PAGE 77 (closing page — 3 panels)

Mood: Fragile reconciliation (temporary)

Motif: Illusion of safety

PANEL 1

Oliver kneels beside her, calmer.

OLIVER:

They're only stories.

PANEL 2

He takes her hand gently.

OLIVER:

You're normal.

PANEL 3 (final image — hold)

Irena leans against him.

But her eyes remain open.

Uncertain.

Scene 8 — The Wedding Dinner (Public Rupture)

PAGE 78 (5 panels)

Mood: Festive surface

Motif: Celebration vs unease

PANEL 1 (wide establishing)

Exterior of a Serbian restaurant at night.

Snow falling softly.

Through the window: a lively gathering.

PANEL 2

Inside: long table.

Oliver, Irena, Alice, Commodore, Carver, others.

Irena wears a small bridal bouquet.

PANEL 3

Musicians in the background playing.

PANEL 4

Irena laughing—genuinely happy.

PANEL 5

A large kettle of hot wine placed on the table.

Steam rising.

PAGE 79 (5 panels)

Mood: Social warmth

Motif: Belonging (temporary)

PANEL 1

Carver applauds loudly.

PANEL 2

Irena smiles—comfortable for once.

PANEL 3

Alice watches her—pleased.

PANEL 4

Commodore raises a glass.

PANEL 5

COMMODORE:

To the bride!

PAGE 80 (5 panels)

Mood: Observation

Motif: Being watched

PANEL 1

Across the room—
A woman sits alone.

Elegant. Still.

PANEL 2 (closer)

Her features: subtly feline.
Eyes large, luminous.

PANEL 3

She watches the party.

PANEL 4

Her gaze settles on Irena.

PANEL 5

Irena—mid-laugh—suddenly falters.

PAGE 81 (6 panels)

Mood: Tension entering the scene

Motif: Recognition

PANEL 1

Irena turns—slowly.

PANEL 2

Their eyes meet across the room.

PANEL 3

Close on the Cat Woman's eyes.

PANEL 4

Close on Irena—fear rising.

PANEL 5

The Cat Woman stands.

PANEL 6

She begins walking toward the table.

PAGE 82 (5 panels)

Mood: Social obliviousness vs private terror

Motif: Two realities

PANEL 1

At the table—Alice chatting.

ALICE:

Thank you for this place, Irena—

PANEL 2

Irena barely hears.

PANEL 3

The Cat Woman approaches in the background.

PANEL 4

Oliver notices Irena's change.

PANEL 5

Irena grips the table edge.

PAGE 83 (5 panels)

Mood: Direct confrontation

Motif: Naming

PANEL 1

The Cat Woman stands beside Irena.

PANEL 2 (tight two-shot)

She leans slightly closer.

PANEL 3 (whisper panel — small bubble)

CAT WOMAN:

My sister.

PANEL 4

Irena recoils—white with fear.

PANEL 5

She makes a small defensive gesture (hands near chest).

PAGE 84 (5 panels)

Mood: Disruption

Motif: Others don't understand

PANEL 1

The Cat Woman smiles faintly.

PANEL 2

She turns away—leaving.

PANEL 3

The party resumes motion—but awkwardly.

PANEL 4

Alice tries to recover tone.

PANEL 5

Oliver leans toward Irena.

OLIVER:

What did she say?

PAGE 85 (6 panels)

Mood: Fear articulated

Motif: Myth confirmed (for her)

PANEL 1

Irena—shaken.

PANEL 2

She hesitates.

PANEL 3

IRENA:

She called me... sister.

PANEL 4

Oliver reacts—then laughs lightly.

PANEL 5

OLIVER:

The cat people again?

PANEL 6

He smiles, dismissing it.

PAGE 86 (5 panels)

Mood: Dual perception

Motif: Comedy vs terror

PANEL 1

Oliver playful:

OLIVER:

She looks like a cat—

PANEL 2

He gestures jokingly.

PANEL 3

Irena tries to laugh.

PANEL 4

Her laughter—too sharp.

PANEL 5

Close on her face:

Not joy—

hysteria.

PAGE 87 (closing page — 3 panels)

Mood: Public mask / internal collapse

Motif: Laughter as fracture

PANEL 1

Oliver laughs with her—thinking it's normal.

PANEL 2

Others smile uncertainly.

PANEL 3 (final image — hold)

Close on Irena.

Laughing—

But her eyes are wide, terrified.

Scene 9 — Outside the Apartment (After the Wedding)

PAGE 88 (5 panels)

Mood: Cold / exposed

Motif: Snow / silence

PANEL 1 (wide establishing)

Night.

Outside Irena's apartment building.

Snow falling softly.

A cab idles at the curb.

PANEL 2

Carver climbs out of the cab, slightly drunk.

PANEL 3

He helps Irena out.

She is composed—but distant.

PANEL 4

Oliver exits after her.

PANEL 5

The Commodore leans from inside the cab.

PAGE 89 (5 panels)

Mood: Awkward humor

Motif: Social tone misaligned

PANEL 1

Carver, cheerful:

CARVER:

I know a joke about weddings—

PANEL 2

He looks around expectantly.

PANEL 3

No one reacts.

PANEL 4

He delivers it anyway.

PANEL 5

Silence.

PAGE 90 (4 panels)

Mood: Disconnection

Motif: Forced reaction

PANEL 1

Irena suddenly laughs.

PANEL 2

Close on her face—

Too intense.

PANEL 3

Oliver notices—concerned.

PANEL 4

Carver thinks he succeeded—smiling proudly.

PAGE 91 (4 panels)

Mood: Withdrawal of others

Motif: Isolation begins

PANEL 1

The Commodore calls Carver back into the cab.

PANEL 2

Carver climbs in.

PANEL 3

The cab pulls away.

PANEL 4 (hold)

Irena and Oliver left alone in the snow.

PAGE 92 (5 panels)

Mood: First real confrontation

Motif: Emotional exposure

PANEL 1

Two-shot. Snow falling between them.

PANEL 2

Oliver gently:

OLIVER:

What is it, darling?

PANEL 3

Irena struggles to speak.

PANEL 4

She begins—

IRENA:

I'm going to beg—

PANEL 5

She stops. Can't continue.

PAGE 93 (5 panels)

Mood: Naming identity

Motif: “Mrs. Reed” as aspiration

PANEL 1

Oliver, softly encouraging:

OLIVER:

Mrs. Reed.

PANEL 2

Irena reacts—this lands deeply.

PANEL 3

She places her hands on his chest.

PANEL 4

IRENA:

It’s nice to hear that.

PANEL 5

Close on her face:

IRENA:

I want to be Mrs. Reed.

PAGE 94 (6 panels)

Mood: Desire vs impossibility

Motif: Identity fracture

PANEL 1

Oliver:

OLIVER:

You are.

PANEL 2

Irena shakes her head.

PANEL 3

IRENA:

I want to be everything that means—

PANEL 4

Tears forming.

PANEL 5

IRENA:

—and I can't.

PANEL 6

Oliver—genuinely confused now.

PAGE 95 (5 panels)

Mood: Rational vs irrational

Motif: Dismissal

PANEL 1

Oliver:

OLIVER:

There's no sense in what you're saying.

PANEL 2

He steps closer.

PANEL 3

OLIVER:

You're upset.

PANEL 4

OLIVER:

That woman frightened you.

PANEL 5

Irena shakes her head—no.

PAGE 96 (6 panels)

Mood: Fear returns

Motif: Time as remedy

PANEL 1

Irena:

IRENA:

She brought back the old fears.

PANEL 2

She grips his hands tightly.

PANEL 3

IRENA:

If I could have time...

PANEL 4

Close on her face—pleading.

PANEL 5

IRENA:

Be patient.

PANEL 6

IRENA:

Let me have time.

PAGE 97 (5 panels)

Mood: Love as restraint

Motif: Gentle refusal

PANEL 1

Oliver watches her carefully now.

PANEL 2

He softens.

PANEL 3

OLIVER:

You can have all the time you want.

PANEL 4

He takes her hand.

PANEL 5

OLIVER:

You didn't have to ask.

PAGE 98 (closing page — 3 panels)

Mood: Tender but unresolved

Motif: Distance within closeness

PANEL 1

Irena lifts his hand and kisses it.

PANEL 2

They stand close—but not embracing.

PANEL 3 (final image — hold)

They walk toward the building together.

Snow falling.

A small space remains between them.

Scene 10 — The Wedding Night (The Door)

PAGE 99 (3 panels — slow, spacious)

Mood: Stillness / threshold

Motif: Separation begins

PANEL 1 (wide establishing)

Interior — Irena's apartment at night.

Dim light from outside filters in.

Snow continues beyond the window.

PANEL 2

Irena crosses the living room toward the bedroom door.

She wears a simple nightgown.

PANEL 3

She enters the bedroom.

The door remains slightly open behind her.

PAGE 100 (4 panels)

Mood: Division of space

Motif: Two worlds

PANEL 1

Living room.

Oliver stands outside the bedroom door.

Still dressed.

PANEL 2

He raises his hand—hesitates—then knocks softly.

OLIVER (small):

Good night, Irena.

PANEL 3

He waits.

PANEL 4

Silence.

PAGE 101 (4 panels)

Mood: Internal conflict

Motif: Barrier (physical + psychological)

PANEL 1

Inside the bedroom.

Irena presses herself against the closed door.

PANEL 2

Her hand slowly lowers toward the doorknob.

PANEL 3

Close on her fingers—almost touching it.

PANEL 4

She freezes.

PAGE 102 (3 panels — stretched time)

Mood: Suspended decision

Motif: Desire vs fear

PANEL 1

Close on Irena's face.

Eyes closed.

Breathing shallow.

PANEL 2

Her hand tightens on the knob.

PANEL 3

She begins to turn it—

PAGE 103 (4 panels)

Mood: Intrusion

Motif: The animal voice

PANEL 1 (black-heavy panel)

From outside, cutting through silence:

SFX: *SCREAM*

PANEL 2

Irena's eyes snap open.

PANEL 3

Her hand jerks away from the knob.

PANEL 4

She recoils slightly from the door.

PAGE 104 (4 panels)

Mood: Collapse inward

Motif: Submission to fear

PANEL 1

Irena sinks slowly to her knees beside the door.

PANEL 2

She curls inward, small, contained.

PANEL 3

Her forehead rests against the wood.

PANEL 4 (small, quiet)

IRENA (whisper):

Good night, Oliver.

PAGE 105 (3 panels)

Mood: Parallel isolation

Motif: Two sides of the same wall

PANEL 1

Living room side of the door.

Oliver stands still, listening.

PANEL 2

He lowers his head slightly.

OLIVER:

Good night, Irena.

PANEL 3

He turns away.

PAGE 106 (closing page — 2 panels, minimal)

Mood: Final separation

Motif: The door as fate

PANEL 1 (full-width)

The closed bedroom door.

Silent.

PANEL 2 (final image — hold, no dialogue)

Split composition:

Left side:

Irena on the floor, back against the door.

Right side (through wall implication):

Oliver standing alone in the dark.

They are close—

but completely separated.

Scene 11 — The Zoo (Recognition / Compulsion)

PAGE 107 (4 panels)

Mood: Isolation

Motif: Return to origin

PANEL 1 (wide establishing)

Day. The zoo promenade.

Sparse crowd. Late autumn light.

PANEL 2

Irena walks alone along the path.

PANEL 3

She approaches the panther cage.

PANEL 4

The panther paces behind bars.

PAGE 108 (5 panels)

Mood: Recognition

Motif: Mutual awareness

PANEL 1

The panther pauses.

PANEL 2

It turns toward Irena.

PANEL 3

Close on its eyes.

PANEL 4

Close on Irena—calm, almost reverent.

PANEL 5

She leans slightly toward the enclosure.

PAGE 109 (5 panels)

Mood: Uneasy communion

Motif: Beauty / danger

PANEL 1

The zookeeper in the background, sweeping.

PANEL 2

He notices her.

KEEPER:

Haven't seen you in a while.

PANEL 3

Irena, still watching the panther:

IRENA:

I've been married.

PANEL 4

The keeper rests on his broom.

PANEL 5

He gestures toward the animal.

PAGE 110 (5 panels)

Mood: Moral framing

Motif: Naming the beast

PANEL 1

Keeper:

KEEPER:

Nobody comes to see him when they're happy.

PANEL 2

Close on panther—tense, coiled.

PANEL 3

Keeper:

KEEPER:

He's not beautiful... he's evil.

PANEL 4

Irena reacts—softly.

PANEL 5

IRENA:

He's beautiful.

PAGE 111 (5 panels)

Mood: Biblical echo

Motif: Beast symbolism

PANEL 1

Keeper leans closer to the cage.

KEEPER:

In Revelations...

PANEL 2

KEEPER:

"The beast... like a leopard."

PANEL 3

Close on Irena—absorbing this.

PANEL 4

She repeats quietly:

IRENA:

Like a leopard...

PANEL 5

The panther presses closer to the bars.

PAGE 112 (4 panels)

Mood: Departure

Motif: Unfinished connection

PANEL 1

Irena steps away from the cage.

PANEL 2

The keeper calls after her.

PANEL 3

She turns slightly—acknowledges him.

PANEL 4

She continues walking alone.



Scene 12 — The Canary (Compulsion Act)

PAGE 113 (5 panels)

Mood: Stillness before rupture

Motif: Domestic cage

PANEL 1 (interior, daylight)

Irena's living room.

Bright, quiet.

PANEL 2

The canary cage in sunlight.

PANEL 3

The bird hops weakly.

PANEL 4

Irena at her desk, finishing a drawing.

PANEL 5

She turns toward the bird.

PAGE 114 (5 panels)

Mood: Repetition of pattern

Motif: Fear response

PANEL 1

Irena approaches the cage.

PANEL 2

She whistles softly.

PANEL 3

The bird shrinks away.

PANEL 4

Irena opens the cage door.

PANEL 5

She reaches inside.

PAGE 115 (4 panels)

Mood: Sudden death

Motif: Fragility

PANEL 1

The bird flutters wildly.

PANEL 2

Close on wings beating.

PANEL 3

The bird collapses.

PANEL 4

Stillness.

PAGE 116 (5 panels)

Mood: Quiet aftermath

Motif: Tenderness / denial

PANEL 1

Irena lifts the small body gently.

PANEL 2

She studies it—no shock, only recognition.

PANEL 3

She places it carefully into a small box.

PANEL 4

She ties it with ribbon.

PANEL 5

She puts on her coat.

PAGE 117 (5 panels)

Mood: Burial interrupted

Motif: Social world intrudes

PANEL 1

Park path. Irena walking with the box.

PANEL 2

She spots a patch of earth.

PANEL 3

She begins to kneel—

PANEL 4

A policeman approaches.

PANEL 5

She straightens—aborts the act.

PAGE 118 (6 panels)

Mood: Compulsion

Motif: Irresistible action

PANEL 1

Irena approaches the panther cage again.

PANEL 2

She stops.

PANEL 3

She opens the box.

PANEL 4

She hesitates—briefly.

PANEL 5 (key action)

She throws the dead bird into the cage.

PANEL 6

The panther reacts instantly.

PAGE 119 (5 panels)

Mood: Mirror / confirmation

Motif: Predator / offering

PANEL 1

The panther bats the bird playfully.

PANEL 2

Close on claws touching the fragile body.

PANEL 3

Irena watches—frozen.

PANEL 4

Something like recognition passes over her face.

PANEL 5

She turns abruptly and walks away.

PAGE 120 (closing page — 3 panels)

Mood: Aftermath / inevitability

Motif: She has crossed a line

PANEL 1

The panther continues playing with the bird.

PANEL 2

The empty path where Irena stood.

PANEL 3 (final image — hold)

The cage.

Bars.

Inside: predator and prey.

Scene 13 — Confession (Return / Decision)

PAGE 121 (5 panels)

Mood: Aftermath / quiet dread

Motif: Stillness after action

PANEL 1 (interior, night)

Irena stands at the window.

City lights beyond.

PANEL 2

Oliver at a small cabinet, pouring drinks.

PANEL 3

He turns slightly.

OLIVER:

Would you like some sherry?

PANEL 4

Irena does not respond.

PANEL 5

He brings two glasses toward her anyway.

PAGE 122 (5 panels)

Mood: Disconnection

Motif: Parallel presence

PANEL 1

He offers her a glass.

PANEL 2

She takes it absently.

PANEL 3

They stand side by side—but not touching.

PANEL 4

Irena stares into the glass.

PANEL 5

Silence.

PAGE 123 (5 panels)

Mood: Opening confession

Motif: Envy / exclusion

PANEL 1

Irena, quietly:

IRENA:

I envy every woman I see.

PANEL 2

Oliver turns—listening now.

PANEL 3

Irena:

IRENA:

They are happy.

PANEL 4

Close on her face:

IRENA:

They make their husbands happy.

PANEL 5

She lowers her gaze.

PAGE 124 (6 panels)

Mood: Self-recognition

Motif: Failure of normality

PANEL 1

Irena:

IRENA:

They lead normal lives.

PANEL 2

Pause.

PANEL 3

She lifts the glass slightly.

PANEL 4

IRENA:

The bird—

PANEL 5

Oliver:

OLIVER:

It died.

PANEL 6

Irena looks at him—intensely.

PAGE 125 (5 panels)

Mood: The truth surfaces

Motif: Cause vs effect

PANEL 1

Irena:

IRENA:

It died of fright.

PANEL 2

Close on Oliver—processing.

PANEL 3

Irena:

IRENA:

When I tried to take it in my hand.

PANEL 4

Oliver tries to normalize.

PANEL 5

OLIVER:

That doesn't mean anything—

PAGE 126 (6 panels)

Mood: Escalation

Motif: Compulsion named

PANEL 1

Irena interrupts:

IRENA:

When I passed the panther's cage—

PANEL 2

She grips the glass tightly.

PANEL 3

IRENA:

I had to open the box.

PANEL 4**IRENA:**

I had to throw the bird to him.

PANEL 5 (key panel)

Close on her face—terrified of herself.

PANEL 6**IRENA:**

I had to.

PAGE 127 (5 panels)**Mood:** Turning point in Oliver**Motif:** From dismissal → concern

PANEL 1

Oliver studies her carefully.

PANEL 2

Silence.

PANEL 3

He sets his glass down.

PANEL 4

His tone shifts—serious now.

PANEL 5**OLIVER:**

I've been trying to joke you out of this...

PAGE 128 (5 panels)**Mood:** Acceptance of problem**Motif:** Naming reality

PANEL 1

Oliver:

OLIVER:

Maybe that's wrong.

PANEL 2

He steps closer.

PANEL 3**OLIVER:**

It's not the stories.

PANEL 4**OLIVER:**

It's that you believe them.

PANEL 5

Irena looks at him—hope flickers.

PAGE 129 (6 panels)

Mood: Rational intervention

Motif: Science vs myth

PANEL 1

Oliver:

OLIVER:

We need help.

PANEL 2

Irena grips his hand.

PANEL 3

Close on the statue (in background).

PANEL 4

Oliver glances at it—rejecting it.

PANEL 5

OLIVER:

Not that kind of help.

PANEL 6

OLIVER:

A psychiatrist.

PAGE 130 (5 panels)

Mood: Hope / desperation

Motif: Surrender to treatment

PANEL 1

Irena turns toward him—urgent.

PANEL 2

IRENA:

Find one for me.

PANEL 3

She steps closer.

PANEL 4

IRENA:

The best one.

PANEL 5

Close on her face—pleading.

PAGE 131 (closing page — 3 panels)

Mood: Transition to next phase

Motif: Entering another system

PANEL 1

Oliver holds her hands.

PANEL 2

They stand together—but uneasy.

PANEL 3 (final image — hold)

In the background:

The statue of King John impaling the cat.

Silent.

Watching.

Scene 14 — Dr. Judd (Hypnosis / Diagnosis / Myth Reframed)

PAGE 132 (4 panels)

Mood: Controlled / unnatural calm

Motif: Light as interrogation

PANEL 1 (black field)

Total darkness.

PANEL 2

A sharp diagonal shaft of light appears.

PANEL 3

Irena's face emerges within the light—eyes closed.

PANEL 4

From the darkness beyond:

JUDD (off):

The cats...

the cats...

PAGE 133 (5 panels)

Mood: Hypnotic descent

Motif: Voice as control

PANEL 1

Irena remains still, eyes closed.

PANEL 2

JUDD (off):

You were saying... the cats...

PANEL 3

Irena begins to speak—soft, detached.

PANEL 4

IRENA:

They torment me.

PANEL 5

Tears begin to form—without expression.

PAGE 134 (5 panels)

Mood: Inner world externalized

Motif: Possession

PANEL 1

IRENA:

I wake in the night...

PANEL 2 (visual insert)

Abstract panel: shadowy feline forms around her.

PANEL 3

IRENA:

I feel their warmth...

PANEL 4

Close on her hands—trembling.

PANEL 5

IRENA:

In me.

PAGE 135 (4 panels)

Mood: Identity dissolution

Motif: Self = other

PANEL 1

Irena's face, half in shadow.

PANEL 2

IRENA:

They are in me.

PANEL 3

A tear runs down her cheek.

PANEL 4

Silence.

PAGE 136 (4 panels)

Mood: Break in trance

Motif: Light returns

PANEL 1

Judd steps into silhouette.

PANEL 2

He pulls back curtains.

PANEL 3

Bright daylight floods the room.

PANEL 4

Irena remains asleep on a couch.

PAGE 137 (5 panels)

Mood: Clinical observation

Motif: Objectification

PANEL 1

Judd stands over her, taking notes.

PANEL 2

The room: sparse, clean, controlled.

PANEL 3

He taps her cheek lightly.

PANEL 4

Irena awakens slowly.

PANEL 5

She looks disoriented.

PAGE 138 (5 panels)

Mood: Disconnection from self

Motif: Memory loss

PANEL 1

Irena:

IRENA:

I remember nothing.

PANEL 2

Judd, calm:

JUDD:

That is my duty.

PANEL 3

He gestures to his notebook.

PANEL 4

JUDD:

You told me everything.

PANEL 5

Irena watches him—anxious.

PAGE 139 (6 panels)

Mood: Myth reframed as pathology

Motif: Translation of belief

PANEL 1

Judd:

JUDD:

You spoke of your village...

PANEL 2

Visual insert: earlier myth imagery (echoed)

PANEL 3

JUDD:

Of violence... fear...

PANEL 4

JUDD:

Women who became cats.

PANEL 5

Irena looks down—ashamed.

PANEL 6

IRENA:

It sounds childish.

PAGE 140 (5 panels)

Mood: Psychological authority

Motif: Control through explanation

PANEL 1

Judd steps closer.

PANEL 2

JUDD:

There is no need for shame.

PANEL 3

He speaks with certainty.

PANEL 4

JUDD:

This is a psychological block.

PANEL 5

Irena looks up—hopeful, fragile.

PAGE 141 (5 panels)

Mood: Rewriting her past

Motif: Trauma reframed

PANEL 1

Judd:

JUDD:

Your childhood...

PANEL 2

JUDD:

Your father's death...

PANEL 3

JUDD:

The children calling your mother a witch—

PANEL 4

Close on Irena—hurt resurfaces.

PANEL 5

JUDD:

These things leave marks.

PAGE 142 (5 panels)

Mood: The central fear articulated (externally)

Motif: Love = destruction

PANEL 1

Judd, quieter now:

JUDD:

You believe—

PANEL 2

JUDD:

That if you love...

PANEL 3

JUDD:

If you kiss—

PANEL 4

JUDD:

You will kill.

PANEL 5

Irena lowers her head—confirmation.

PAGE 143 (4 panels)

Mood: False reassurance

Motif: Control illusion

PANEL 1

Judd turns away—confident.

PANEL 2

He closes his notebook.

PANEL 3

JUDD:

We can cure this.

PANEL 4

Irena looks at him—hope mixed with fear.

PAGE 144 (closing page — 3 panels)

Mood: Uneasy transition

Motif: New authority

PANEL 1

Judd helps her with her coat—overly familiar.

PANEL 2

They move toward the door.

PANEL 3 (final image — hold)

Judd in the doorway, watching her leave.

His face unreadable.

Scene 15 — The Apartment (Return / Triangle Tightens)

PAGE 145 (4 panels)

Mood: Light return (false)

Motif: Energy shift

PANEL 1 (stairwell, upward motion)

Irena runs lightly up the stairs, almost buoyant.

She hums to herself.

PANEL 2

Close on her face—brighter than we've seen in a while.

PANEL 3

She reaches the hallway.

PANEL 4

She unlocks her apartment door, still humming.

PAGE 146 (5 panels)

Mood: Sudden rupture

Motif: Uninvited intimacy

PANEL 1

Irena opens the door—mid-motion—

PANEL 2 (shock reveal)

Inside:

Oliver and Alice sitting together on the sofa.

Close. Comfortable.

PANEL 3

Oliver lighting Alice's cigarette.

PANEL 4

Both turn toward Irena.

PANEL 5

Irena stands frozen in the doorway.

PAGE 147 (5 panels)

Mood: Forced normalcy

Motif: Overcompensation

PANEL 1

Irena steps inside quickly—too quickly.

PANEL 2

She goes directly to Alice, taking her hands.

IRENA:

Alice! It's so nice to see you!

PANEL 3

Alice—slightly thrown off.

PANEL 4

Oliver watches, uneasy now.

PANEL 5

Irena smiles—bright, but strained.

PAGE 148 (5 panels)

Mood: Social explanation

Motif: Trust breached

PANEL 1

Alice, casually:

ALICE:

How did you make out with Louis?

PANEL 2

Irena pauses—confused.

IRENA:

Louis?

PANEL 3

Alice:

ALICE:

Dr. Judd.

PANEL 4

Close on Irena—realization.

PANEL 5

She turns slowly toward Oliver.

PAGE 149 (5 panels)

Mood: Betrayal (quiet)

Motif: Private → public

PANEL 1

Irena looks at Oliver—hurt, contained.

PANEL 2

Oliver, quickly:

OLIVER:

Alice knows, darling.

PANEL 3

Alice continues, unaware of tension:

ALICE:

I suggested him—

PANEL 4

Oliver looks increasingly uncomfortable.

PANEL 5

Irena withdraws slightly.

PAGE 150 (5 panels)

Mood: Subtle fracture

Motif: Exclusion

PANEL 1

Alice:

ALICE:

He knows everything about psychiatry.

PANEL 2

Irena looks between them.

PANEL 3

The space shifts—

Irena now slightly apart from the other two.

PANEL 4

Oliver tries to bridge it—unsuccessfully.

PANEL 5

Silence.

PAGE 151 (5 panels)

Mood: Emotional displacement

Motif: Third point of triangle

PANEL 1

Alice sits back down beside Oliver.

PANEL 2

Irena remains standing.

PANEL 3

Composition:

Alice + Oliver together

Irena separate

PANEL 4

Irena watches them.

PANEL 5

Her expression shifts—something darker, quieter.

PAGE 152 (6 panels)

Mood: Jealousy emerging

Motif: Observation

PANEL 1

Oliver and Alice exchange a casual glance.

PANEL 2

Irena notices.

PANEL 3

Close on her eyes—tracking.

PANEL 4

Alice laughs lightly at something.

PANEL 5

Oliver smiles in response.

PANEL 6

Irena turns away.

PAGE 153 (5 panels)

Mood: Withdrawal

Motif: Isolation inside shared space

PANEL 1

Irena moves toward the window.

PANEL 2

She looks out—back to earlier posture.

PANEL 3

Behind her: Oliver and Alice continue talking.

PANEL 4

They are slightly blurred (depth of field effect).

PANEL 5

Irena in sharp focus—alone.

PAGE 154 (closing page — 3 panels)

Mood: Triangle fixed

Motif: Spatial truth

PANEL 1

Wide shot of the room:

Three figures—
but not together.

PANEL 2

The canary cage between them.

PANEL 3 (final image — hold)

Irena reflected faintly in the window glass—

Overlaying the room behind her.

She is both inside... and outside.

Scene 16 — Drift (The Triangle Tightens Further)

PAGE 155 (5 panels)

Mood: Continuation without resolution

Motif: Conversation split

PANEL 1 (wide interior)

Same living room. Same positions—but subtly shifted:

Alice and Oliver seated closer now.

Irena still near the window.

PANEL 2

Alice speaks—light, conversational.

ALICE:

You should come out with us more, Irena.

PANEL 3

Irena turns slightly—but does not fully face them.

PANEL 4

IRENA:

I like being at home.

PANEL 5

Alice and Oliver exchange a glance.

PAGE 156 (5 panels)

Mood: Misalignment

Motif: Two rhythms

PANEL 1

Oliver leans forward.

OLIVER:

You shouldn't stay alone so much.

PANEL 2

Irena—quiet:

IRENA:

I'm not alone.

PANEL 3

Silence lands awkwardly.

PANEL 4

Alice tries to lighten it.

PANEL 5

But her smile fades quickly.

PAGE 157 (6 panels)

Mood: Emotional substitution

Motif: Ease vs tension

PANEL 1

Alice rises, moving casually around the room.

PANEL 2

She examines a drawing on the desk.

PANEL 3

Oliver joins her—standing close.

PANEL 4

They talk quietly together.

(no dialogue—let proximity speak)

PANEL 5

Irena watches from across the room.

PANEL 6

Close on her face—reading them.

PAGE 158 (5 panels)

Mood: Awareness

Motif: Observation becomes understanding

PANEL 1

Irena's POV:

Alice and Oliver in soft conversation.

PANEL 2

Their heads slightly inclined toward each other.

PANEL 3

A shared laugh—small, natural.

PANEL 4

Irena blinks—processing.

PANEL 5

She looks down.

PAGE 159 (5 panels)

Mood: Withdrawal intensifies

Motif: Interior retreat

PANEL 1

Irena moves further into shadow.

PANEL 2

The window behind her—darkening light.

PANEL 3

Her reflection faint in the glass.

PANEL 4

Behind her, the conversation continues.

PANEL 5

She is no longer part of it.

PAGE 160 (6 panels)

Mood: Subtle confrontation (failed)

Motif: Attempt to rejoin

PANEL 1

Irena turns back toward them.

PANEL 2

She steps forward.

PANEL 3

She opens her mouth to speak—

PANEL 4

But stops.

PANEL 5

Alice says something to Oliver—interrupting the moment.

PANEL 6

Irena closes herself off again.

PAGE 161 (5 panels)

Mood: Emotional realignment

Motif: New center

PANEL 1

Alice returns to sit—this time slightly closer to Oliver.

PANEL 2

Oliver turns toward her instinctively.

PANEL 3

Irena remains standing.

PANEL 4

Composition:

Alice + Oliver centered

Irena off to the side

PANEL 5

The balance has shifted.

PAGE 162 (5 panels)

Mood: Quiet recognition

Motif: Loss

PANEL 1

Close on Irena.

PANEL 2

Her eyes move between them.

PANEL 3

She understands now.

PANEL 4

No anger—just something deeper.

PANEL 5

A small exhale.

PAGE 163 (4 panels)

Mood: Symbol returns

Motif: Cage / containment

PANEL 1

The canary cage.

Still silent.

PANEL 2

Bars casting shadows.

PANEL 3

Irena's reflection overlaps the cage.

PANEL 4

Visual echo:

She = inside.

PAGE 164 (closing page — 3 panels)

Mood: Emotional displacement complete

Motif: Replacement

PANEL 1

Alice and Oliver in conversation—natural, easy.

PANEL 2

Irena in the background—separate, still.

PANEL 3 (final image — hold)

Three figures in one room—

But only two belong together.

Scene 17 — Oliver & Alice (Ease / Alignment)

PAGE 165 (5 panels)

Mood: Relief / contrast

Motif: Lightness returns (but only here)

PANEL 1 (establishing)

Drafting office, late afternoon.

Quieter now. Fewer people.

PANEL 2

Alice at her desk, working.

PANEL 3

Oliver nearby—less focused than before.

PANEL 4

He glances toward Alice.

PANEL 5

She looks up—catches him.

PAGE 166 (5 panels)

Mood: Casual connection
Motif: Unforced interaction

PANEL 1

Alice:

ALICE:

You're not working.

PANEL 2

Oliver shrugs slightly.

PANEL 3

OLIVER:

I am.

PANEL 4

Alice smiles—knows better.

PANEL 5

She returns to her work—but amused.

PAGE 167 (6 panels)

Mood: Conversation opens
Motif: Safe space

PANEL 1

Oliver leans back slightly.

PANEL 2

OLIVER:

You always seem so... certain.

PANEL 3

Alice glances at him.

PANEL 4

ALICE:

About what?

PANEL 5

OLIVER:

Everything.

PANEL 6

Alice considers that.

PAGE 168 (5 panels)

Mood: Definition of character

Motif: Grounded identity

PANEL 1

Alice:

ALICE:

I just don't worry about things I can't fix.

PANEL 2

Oliver absorbs that.

PANEL 3

He nods—slowly.

PANEL 4

OLIVER:

That must be nice.

PANEL 5

Alice studies him now—more seriously.

PAGE 169 (6 panels)

Mood: Irena enters through absence

Motif: The unsaid

PANEL 1

Alice:

ALICE:

How is she?

PANEL 2

Oliver hesitates.

PANEL 3

OLIVER:

She's... trying.

PANEL 4

Alice watches him carefully.

PANEL 5

ALICE:

And you?

PANEL 6

He doesn't answer immediately.

PAGE 170 (5 panels)

Mood: Emotional honesty begins

Motif: Confession without drama

PANEL 1

Oliver:

OLIVER:

I don't know what to do.

PANEL 2

He looks down at his hands.

PANEL 3

OLIVER:

I can't reach her.

PANEL 4

Alice softens—genuine empathy.

PANEL 5

She leans slightly closer.

PAGE 171 (5 panels)

Mood: Alignment

Motif: Emotional proximity

PANEL 1

Alice:

ALICE:

You're doing everything you can.

PANEL 2

Oliver looks up at her.

PANEL 3

Their eyes meet.

PANEL 4

Silence—comfortable.

PANEL 5

They don't look away.

PAGE 172 (6 panels)

Mood: Shift (subtle but irreversible)

Motif: Two become center

PANEL 1

Alice breaks eye contact—just slightly.

PANEL 2

She returns to work—but slower now.

PANEL 3

Oliver continues watching her.

PANEL 4

He smiles faintly.

PANEL 5

She feels it—without looking.

PANEL 6

A small smile appears on her face.

PAGE 173 (5 panels)

Mood: Unspoken bond

Motif: Ease

PANEL 1

They begin talking again—light, natural.

(no dialogue—let rhythm carry)

PANEL 2

Shared laughter.

PANEL 3

Leaning slightly toward each other.

PANEL 4

Work forgotten.

PANEL 5

The space between them has closed.

PAGE 174 (closing page — 3 panels)

Mood: Replacement complete (emotionally)

Motif: New center of gravity

PANEL 1

Wide shot of the office:

Alice and Oliver together—center frame.

PANEL 2

Their conversation continues—easy, flowing.

PANEL 3 (final image — hold)

An empty chair nearby.

Where Irena *should* be.

Scene 18 — The Street (Stalking / The Bus)

PAGE 175 (4 panels)

Mood: Isolation / exposure

Motif: Street as empty stage

PANEL 1 (wide establishing)

Night. A long, nearly empty street.

Streetlamps spaced far apart.
Rain slicks the pavement.

PANEL 2

Alice exits a building, umbrella opening.

PANEL 3

She begins walking.

PANEL 4

Her footsteps echo.

SFX: *tap... tap... tap...*

PAGE 176 (5 panels)

Mood: Subtle intrusion

Motif: Sound duplication

PANEL 1

Alice walking—steady rhythm.

PANEL 2

Another rhythm enters.

SFX: *tap... tap...*

PANEL 3

She slows slightly.

PANEL 4

The second rhythm slows too.

PANEL 5

Alice glances back.

PAGE 177 (5 panels)

Mood: Nothing visible

Motif: Absence

PANEL 1

Empty street behind her.

PANEL 2

Lamp glow. Rain.

PANEL 3

No one there.

PANEL 4

Alice turns forward again.

PANEL 5

Her grip tightens on the umbrella.

PAGE 178 (6 panels)

Mood: Escalation

Motif: Echo becomes threat

PANEL 1

She walks faster.

PANEL 2

Footsteps resume—closer.

SFX: *tap-tap... tap-tap...*

PANEL 3

Alice's breathing quickens.

PANEL 4

She turns sharply—

PANEL 5

Empty again.

PANEL 6

But the sound continues.

PAGE 179 (5 panels)

Mood: Spatial distortion

Motif: Presence without form

PANEL 1

Close on Alice's face—alert.

PANEL 2

Wide shot: she is very small in the street.

PANEL 3

Darkness between lampposts feels heavier.

PANEL 4

Wind moves slightly.

PANEL 5

Something unseen shifts just outside the light.

PAGE 180 (5 panels)

Mood: Sound replaces sight

Motif: Growl

PANEL 1 (black-heavy panel)

From darkness—

SFX: *low... growl...*

PANEL 2

Alice freezes.

PANEL 3

She looks toward the darkness.

PANEL 4

Nothing visible.

PANEL 5

The growl again—closer.

PAGE 181 (6 panels)

Mood: Panic

Motif: Flight

PANEL 1

Alice begins walking faster.

PANEL 2

Then faster—

PANEL 3

Then nearly running.

PANEL 4

Footsteps now clearly behind her.

PANEL 5

She doesn't turn this time.

PANEL 6

Her breath becomes audible.

PAGE 182 (5 panels)

Mood: Compression of space

Motif: Trap

PANEL 1

The street narrows visually.

PANEL 2

Lamp spacing feels farther apart.

PANEL 3

Shadows stretch unnaturally.

PANEL 4

The sound is almost on top of her now.

PANEL 5

She reaches the bus stop.

PAGE 183 (5 panels)

Mood: Anticipation

Motif: Waiting

PANEL 1

Alice stands at the bus stop.

PANEL 2

She looks down the street.

PANEL 3

Nothing coming.

PANEL 4

Behind her—darkness.

PANEL 5

Silence... then—

PAGE 184 (6 panels — timing critical)

Mood: Peak tension

Motif: Sudden rupture

PANEL 1

Close on Alice's face—terrified.

PANEL 2

The growl rises—

SFX: *GRRR*—

PANEL 3 (sudden, full-width impact panel)

SFX (huge): *HISSESSSSSSSS!!!*

A bus bursts into frame.

PANEL 4

Air brakes expel steam violently.

PANEL 5

Alice recoils—shocked.

PANEL 6

The bus door opens.

PAGE 185 (4 panels)

Mood: Release (but incomplete)

Motif: Safety illusion

PANEL 1

Bus driver leans out.

PANEL 2

Alice boards quickly.

PANEL 3

Inside—light, people, normalcy.

PANEL 4

She sits—trying to steady herself.

PAGE 186 (closing page — 3 panels)

Mood: Unresolved threat

Motif: Something remains

PANEL 1

Through the bus window:

The empty street.

PANEL 2

Rain continues falling.

PANEL 3 (final image — hold)

The darkness between the streetlamps.

Nothing visible—

But it feels occupied.

Scene 19 — The Swimming Pool (Reflections / Presence)

PAGE 187 (4 panels)

Mood: Isolation / enclosure

Motif: Water as mirror

PANEL 1 (wide establishing)

Interior — an indoor swimming pool at night.
Large, echoing, mostly empty.

PANEL 2

Alice enters cautiously, robe wrapped around her.

PANEL 3

She looks around—no one present.

PANEL 4

The water lies still. Glassy.

PAGE 188 (5 panels)

Mood: False safety
Motif: Surface calm

PANEL 1

Alice places her things on a bench.

PANEL 2

She unwraps her robe.

PANEL 3

She dips a foot into the water.

PANEL 4

Ripples spread outward.

PANEL 5

She slides in.

PAGE 189 (5 panels)

Mood: Sensory shift
Motif: Echo

PANEL 1

Alice swims slowly across the pool.

PANEL 2

The room amplifies every sound.

PANEL 3

SFX: *splash... echo...*

PANEL 4

She pauses, floating.

PANEL 5

Listening.

PAGE 190 (5 panels)

Mood: First disturbance

Motif: Sound without source

PANEL 1

A faint echo—separate from her movement.

SFX: *...step...*

PANEL 2

Alice looks toward the edge of the pool.

PANEL 3

Empty.

PANEL 4

Another sound.

SFX: *step...*

PANEL 5

She tenses.

PAGE 191 (6 panels)

Mood: Presence builds

Motif: Circling

PANEL 1

Alice swims toward the pool's edge.

PANEL 2

She grips the side.

PANEL 3

She looks out into the room.

PANEL 4

Shadows stretch along the walls.

PANEL 5

The lights flicker slightly.

PANEL 6

A shadow passes—quick, indistinct.

PAGE 192 (5 panels)

Mood: Trapped

Motif: Boundary (water vs land)

PANEL 1

Alice remains in the water—hesitant to climb out.

PANEL 2

She scans the perimeter.

PANEL 3

SFX: *low... growl...*

PANEL 4

She freezes.

PANEL 5

The sound echoes across the pool.

PAGE 193 (6 panels)

Mood: Escalation

Motif: Fragmented perception

PANEL 1

Close on Alice's face—fear rising.

PANEL 2

Water ripples around her.

PANEL 3

Reflection in the water—distorted.

PANEL 4

A shape appears in the reflection—

PANEL 5

—but disappears when she looks up.

PANEL 6

She spins—trying to locate it.

PAGE 194 (5 panels)

Mood: Predator unseen

Motif: Circling presence

PANEL 1

The camera-equivalent circles her (panel sequence):

Different angles around the pool.

PANEL 2

Shadow near the far wall.

PANEL 3

Movement near the doorway.

PANEL 4

Nothing resolves into form.

PANEL 5

The growl again—closer.

PAGE 195 (6 panels)

Mood: Peak dread

Motif: Exposure

PANEL 1

Alice presses herself against the pool wall.

PANEL 2

She looks upward—light glaring.

PANEL 3

Her body partially submerged—vulnerable.

PANEL 4

A shadow crosses over her.

PANEL 5

The water trembles.

PANEL 6

She gasps.

PAGE 196 (5 panels)

Mood: Breakdown

Motif: Panic

PANEL 1

Alice ducks briefly underwater.

PANEL 2

Underwater panel—distorted, muffled world.

PANEL 3

She surfaces—breathing hard.

PANEL 4

She tries to scream—but stops herself.

PANEL 5

The growl—almost a whisper now.

PAGE 197 (5 panels)

Mood: False resolution

Motif: Return to normal

PANEL 1

Suddenly—
The overhead lights stabilize.

PANEL 2

The shadows settle.

PANEL 3

The sound stops.

PANEL 4

The room appears empty again.

PANEL 5

Alice remains frozen in the water.

PAGE 198 (closing page — 3 panels)

Mood: Unresolved terror

Motif: Reflection lies

PANEL 1

Alice slowly moves toward the edge.

PANEL 2

She looks into the water.

PANEL 3 (final image — hold)

Her reflection—

For a split instant—

Feels like it is **not quite her**.

Scene 20 — Alice & Oliver (Fear Spoken / Doubt Begins)

PAGE 199 (5 panels)

Mood: Aftershock

Motif: Safety space (but shaken)

PANEL 1 (interior — office, evening)

The drafting office again—nearly empty.

Lights dimmer than usual.

PANEL 2

Alice sits at a desk, still damp-haired, coat wrapped tightly.

PANEL 3

Oliver enters quickly.

PANEL 4

He sees her condition—concern sharpens.

PANEL 5

OLIVER:

Alice—what happened?

PAGE 200 (5 panels)

Mood: Fear still present

Motif: Residual shock

PANEL 1

Alice looks up—eyes wide, not fully settled.

PANEL 2

She tries to speak.

PANEL 3

ALICE:

Something followed me.

PANEL 4

Oliver listens—carefully now.

PANEL 5

ALICE:

At the pool... it was there.

PAGE 201 (5 panels)

Mood: Naming the unknown

Motif: Language fails

PANEL 1

Oliver:

OLIVER:

Someone?

PANEL 2

Alice shakes her head.

PANEL 3

ALICE:

No... not someone.

PANEL 4

She struggles for words.

PANEL 5

ALICE:

Something.

PAGE 202 (6 panels)

Mood: Oliver resists—but less strongly

Motif: Rationality under pressure

PANEL 1

Oliver sits across from her.

PANEL 2

OLIVER:

You were frightened.

PANEL 3

Alice leans forward—urgent.

PANEL 4

ALICE:

I've been frightened before.

PANEL 5

ALICE:

This was different.

PANEL 6

Oliver doesn't interrupt.

PAGE 203 (5 panels)

Mood: Suspicion emerges

Motif: Irena enters the conversation

PANEL 1

Alice hesitates.

PANEL 2

She looks at Oliver carefully.

PANEL 3

ALICE:

Do you think—

PANEL 4

She stops herself.

PANEL 5

ALICE:

No... it's crazy.

PAGE 204 (5 panels)

Mood: The forbidden thought

Motif: Naming Irena as threat

PANEL 1

Oliver leans forward.

OLIVER:

What?

PANEL 2

Alice meets his eyes.

PANEL 3

ALICE:

Do you think it could be... Irena?

PANEL 4

Silence.

PANEL 5

Oliver looks away.

PAGE 205 (6 panels)

Mood: Internal conflict (Oliver)

Motif: Belief vs loyalty

PANEL 1

Oliver:

OLIVER:

That's not possible.

PANEL 2

But his tone lacks certainty.

PANEL 3

Alice watches him closely.

PANEL 4

ALICE:

You don't believe that anymore.

PANEL 5

Close on Oliver—caught.

PANEL 6

He doesn't answer.

PAGE 206 (5 panels)

Mood: Alignment under pressure

Motif: Shared fear

PANEL 1

Alice softens—less accusatory now.

PANEL 2

ALICE:

Something's happening to her.

PANEL 3

ALICE:

And to us.

PANEL 4

Oliver finally meets her gaze.

PANEL 5

They are aligned—uneasily.

PAGE 207 (5 panels)

Mood: Turning point

Motif: Decision forming

PANEL 1

Oliver stands.

PANEL 2

He moves away—thinking.

PANEL 3

OLIVER:

We'll talk to Judd.

PANEL 4

Alice nods—relieved but uncertain.

PANEL 5

The name hangs in the room.

PAGE 208 (closing page — 3 panels)

Mood: Convergence

Motif: All paths lead to one place

PANEL 1

Alice alone at the desk again.

PANEL 2

She looks toward the darkened office.

PANEL 3 (final image — hold)

A shadow stretches across the floor behind her—

Too long. Too soft.

Impossible to place.

Scene 21 — Dr. Judd (Intrusion / Misreading / Control)

PAGE 209 (4 panels)

Mood: Controlled calm (false)

Motif: Re-entry into the “safe” space

PANEL 1 (establishing)

Judd’s office. Daylight.

Orderly. Quiet. Neutral.

PANEL 2

Irena sits on the couch again.

Hands folded tightly.

PANEL 3

Judd sits opposite—watching her carefully.

PANEL 4

Silence between them.

PAGE 210 (5 panels)

Mood: Testing boundaries

Motif: Language as probe

PANEL 1

Judd:

JUDD:

You feel better today.

PANEL 2

Irena:

IRENA:

Yes.

PANEL 3

A beat.

PANEL 4

Judd leans forward slightly.

PANEL 5

JUDD:

You've been seeing Oliver?

PAGE 211 (5 panels)

Mood: Displacement

Motif: Love redirected

PANEL 1

Irena:

IRENA:

He sees Alice.

PANEL 2

Judd registers this—interest sharpened.

PANEL 3

JUDD:

And that troubles you.

PANEL 4

Irena shakes her head.

PANEL 5

IRENA:

No.

PAGE 212 (6 panels)

Mood: Misinterpretation

Motif: Judd reframes everything

PANEL 1

Judd rises slowly.

PANEL 2

He begins pacing—circling her.

PANEL 3

JUDD:

You transfer your feelings...

PANEL 4

JUDD:

You fear your own desires...

PANEL 5

He moves behind her.

PANEL 6

JUDD:

You create fantasies to contain them.

PAGE 213 (5 panels)

Mood: Irena resisting the frame

Motif: Two interpretations of reality

PANEL 1

Irena turns to follow his movement.

PANEL 2

IRENA:

It is not fantasy.

PANEL 3

Judd smiles slightly—dismissive.

PANEL 4

JUDD:

Of course it is.

PANEL 5

He steps closer.

PAGE 214 (5 panels)

Mood: Boundary crossing begins

Motif: Proximity

PANEL 1

Judd stands very near her now.

PANEL 2

Irena shifts—uncomfortable.

PANEL 3

JUDD:

You are a very lovely woman.

PANEL 4

Irena stiffens.

PANEL 5

Silence.

PAGE 215 (6 panels)

Mood: Predatory shift

Motif: Authority becomes desire

PANEL 1

Judd lowers his voice.

PANEL 2

JUDD:

There is no curse.

PANEL 3

He reaches toward her.

PANEL 4

JUDD:

No transformation.

PANEL 5

His hand touches her arm.

PANEL 6

Irena recoils—sharp, instinctive.

PAGE 216 (5 panels)

Mood: Alarm

Motif: Threat recognized

PANEL 1

Irena stands quickly.

PANEL 2

She backs away from him.

PANEL 3

IRENA:

No—

PANEL 4

Judd advances slightly.

PANEL 5

JUDD:

You're safe here.

PAGE 217 (5 panels)

Mood: Total misreading

Motif: Control vs fear

PANEL 1

Irena shakes her head.

PANEL 2

IRENA:

You don't understand.

PANEL 3

Judd—calm, confident.

PANEL 4

JUDD:

I understand perfectly.

PANEL 5

He reaches for her again.

PAGE 218 (6 panels)

Mood: Final warning ignored

Motif: Crossing the line

PANEL 1

Irena, terrified now:

IRENA:

Please—

PANEL 2

She backs toward the door.

PANEL 3

IRENA:

Don't come near me.

PANEL 4

Judd steps closer anyway.

PANEL 5

JUDD:

There's nothing to fear.

PANEL 6

Close on Irena's eyes—wide, on the edge.

PAGE 219 (closing page — 3 panels)

Mood: Impending rupture

Motif: Transformation threshold

PANEL 1

Irena pressed against the door.

PANEL 2

Judd advancing toward her.

PANEL 3 (final image — hold)

Her face—

Something shifting beneath the surface.

Scene 22 — The Break / The Hunt Begins

PAGE 220 (4 panels)

Mood: Aftershock silence

Motif: Empty space

PANEL 1 (wide)

Judd's office—now empty of movement.

The couch. The chair. Stillness.

PANEL 2

The door stands slightly ajar.

PANEL 3

A curtain stirs faintly.

PANEL 4

Silence—thick, unnatural.

PAGE 221 (5 panels)

Mood: Absence becomes presence

Motif: Something unseen remains

PANEL 1

Close on the couch where Irena sat.

PANEL 2

Indentation still visible in the cushion.

PANEL 3

A shadow shifts along the wall.

PANEL 4

No visible source.

PANEL 5

A low sound—

SFX: ...*breath*...

PAGE 222 (5 panels)

Mood: Judd unaware

Motif: False control

PANEL 1

Exterior—Judd exits the building.

PANEL 2

He adjusts his coat, composed.

PANEL 3

He lights a cigarette.

PANEL 4

He walks down the sidewalk.

PANEL 5

Streetlights flicker faintly.

PAGE 223 (6 panels)

Mood: Pursuit begins

Motif: Echo of earlier stalking

PANEL 1

Judd walking—steady pace.

PANEL 2

Behind him—empty sidewalk.

PANEL 3

A second set of footsteps begins.

SFX: *step... step...*

PANEL 4

Judd slows.

PANEL 5

The sound slows with him.

PANEL 6

He turns—

PAGE 224 (5 panels)

Mood: Nothing seen / everything felt

Motif: Absence

PANEL 1

Empty street.

PANEL 2

Lamp glow, rain.

PANEL 3

Judd frowns—slightly uneasy now.

PANEL 4

He turns forward again.

PANEL 5

The footsteps resume—closer.

PAGE 225 (5 panels)

Mood: Realization begins

Motif: Loss of control

PANEL 1

Judd quickens his pace.

PANEL 2

The sound follows.

PANEL 3

He glances back again.

PANEL 4

Still nothing visible.

PANEL 5

But now—

SFX: *low... growl...*

PAGE 226 (6 panels)

Mood: Fear overtakes logic

Motif: Predator / prey reversal

PANEL 1

Judd stops completely.

PANEL 2

He listens—rigid.

PANEL 3

The growl again—closer.

PANEL 4

He drops the cigarette.

PANEL 5

Close on his face—first true fear.

PANEL 6

He turns quickly—

PAGE 227 (5 panels)

Mood: The unseen pursuer

Motif: Movement without form

PANEL 1

A shadow moves across a wall behind him.

PANEL 2

Too large. Too fluid.

PANEL 3

Judd backs away.

PANEL 4

He reaches into his coat.

PANEL 5

His hand grips something inside (knife implied).

PAGE 228 (6 panels)

Mood: Panic / retreat

Motif: Flight

PANEL 1

Judd turns and runs.

PANEL 2

Footsteps—now heavy, fast.

PANEL 3

The growl rises—

PANEL 4

Shadows stretch and distort around him.

PANEL 5

He fumbles toward a doorway.

PANEL 6

He enters his building quickly.

PAGE 229 (5 panels)

Mood: Temporary refuge

Motif: Interior trap

PANEL 1

Interior hallway—dim, enclosed.

PANEL 2

Judd presses his back to the wall.

PANEL 3

Breathing hard.

PANEL 4

He listens.

PANEL 5

Silence again.

PAGE 230 (closing page — 3 panels)

Mood: Imminent violence

Motif: The hunt is not over

PANEL 1

Judd slowly straightens.

PANEL 2

He moves deeper into the hallway.

PANEL 3 (final image — hold)

At the far end of the corridor—

Darkness.

Something shifts within it.

Scene 23 — The Confrontation (Judd's End)

PAGE 231 (4 panels)

Mood: Enclosed danger

Motif: Trap

PANEL 1 (interior — Judd's apartment/hallway)

Dim, narrow corridor.

Light from a single fixture.

PANEL 2

Judd moves cautiously down the hall.

PANEL 3

His footsteps echo.

SFX: *step... step...*

PANEL 4

He pauses—listening.

PAGE 232 (5 panels)

Mood: Presence closing in

Motif: Sound without form

PANEL 1

A faint sound behind him.

PANEL 2

SFX: *low... growl...*

PANEL 3

Judd turns sharply.

PANEL 4

Empty corridor.

PANEL 5

But the light flickers.

PAGE 233 (6 panels)

Mood: Panic rising

Motif: Loss of control

PANEL 1

Judd backs toward his apartment door.

PANEL 2

His hand fumbles for the key.

PANEL 3

The growl again—closer.

PANEL 4

His hand trembles.

PANEL 5

He unlocks the door—

PANEL 6

He slips inside quickly.

PAGE 234 (5 panels)

Mood: False refuge

Motif: Interior becomes arena

PANEL 1

Interior—Judd's apartment.

Sparse. Dim.

PANEL 2

He closes the door behind him.

PANEL 3

Leans against it—breathing hard.

PANEL 4

Silence.

PANEL 5

He exhales—thinks he is safe.

PAGE 235 (6 panels)

Mood: The presence is inside

Motif: No escape

PANEL 1

A shadow moves across the wall.

PANEL 2

Judd notices—freezes.

PANEL 3

He slowly turns.

PANEL 4

The room appears empty—

PANEL 5

—but the shadow remains.

PANEL 6

It shifts again.

PAGE 236 (5 panels)

Mood: Final confrontation

Motif: Predator revealed (indirectly)

PANEL 1

Judd reaches into his coat.

PANEL 2

He pulls out a concealed blade (or cane-sword implied).

PANEL 3

He raises it defensively.

PANEL 4

JUDD:

Who's there?

PANEL 5

No answer—only a low growl.

PAGE 237 (6 panels)

Mood: Impact

Motif: Violence without full visibility

PANEL 1 (black-heavy panel)

The growl surges—

PANEL 2

A sudden movement from darkness.

PANEL 3

Judd swings the blade—

PANEL 4

A blur of motion—claw-like forms—

PANEL 5

The blade strikes something—

PANEL 6

A cry—cut short.

PAGE 238 (4 panels)

Mood: Aftermath

Motif: Silence returns

PANEL 1

The room—still.

PANEL 2

Judd lies on the floor.

PANEL 3

His hand still gripping the blade.

PANEL 4

A spreading dark stain beneath him.

PAGE 239 (5 panels)

Mood: Tragic realization

Motif: What has been done

PANEL 1

The blade visible—embedded.

PANEL 2

The angle suggests it struck inward—
into the attacker.

PANEL 3

A shadow withdraws.

PANEL 4

A glimpse—only partial—

A woman's silhouette.

PANEL 5

Then gone.

PAGE 240 (closing page — 3 panels)

Mood: Death / inevitability

Motif: Consequence

PANEL 1

Judd's body—still.

PANEL 2

The apartment—silent again.

PANEL 3 (final image — hold)

The blade.

Blood-dark.

Scene 24 — The Zoo (Release / Identification / End)

PAGE 241 (4 panels)

Mood: Return to origin

Motif: Circular structure

PANEL 1 (wide establishing)

Night. The zoo promenade.

Nearly empty. Quiet.

PANEL 2

Streetlamp light pools along the path.

PANEL 3

Irena walks alone.

Slow. Steady.

PANEL 4

She approaches the panther cage.

PAGE 242 (5 panels)

Mood: Recognition

Motif: Mirror

PANEL 1

The panther inside—still, alert.

PANEL 2

It turns toward her.

PANEL 3

Their eyes meet.

PANEL 4

Close on Irena—calm now.

PANEL 5

No fear.

PAGE 243 (5 panels)

Mood: Acceptance

Motif: No more resistance

PANEL 1

Irena steps closer to the bars.

PANEL 2

She places her hand lightly against them.

PANEL 3

The panther moves nearer.

PANEL 4

Bars between them—thin, fragile.

PANEL 5

She studies the lock.

PAGE 244 (5 panels)

Mood: Decision

Motif: Release

PANEL 1

Irena removes a small key.

PANEL 2

She hesitates—for only a moment.

PANEL 3

She inserts it into the lock.

PANEL 4

The mechanism turns.

SFX: *click*

PANEL 5

The cage door opens.

PAGE 245 (4 panels)

Mood: Stillness before action

Motif: Threshold crossed

PANEL 1

The panther does not rush out.

PANEL 2

It steps forward slowly.

PANEL 3

Irena does not move away.

PANEL 4

They face each other.

PAGE 246 (5 panels)

Mood: Union / inevitability

Motif: No separation

PANEL 1

The panther circles her.

PANEL 2

She turns slightly with it.

PANEL 3

No fear. No resistance.

PANEL 4

A shadow envelops both forms.

PANEL 5

A sudden movement—

PAGE 247 (4 panels)

Mood: Final act (unseen directly)

Motif: Consequence

PANEL 1 (black-heavy)

A sharp, violent sound—

SFX: *SNARL*—

PANEL 2

Then silence.

PANEL 3

The cage door swings slightly.

PANEL 4

Stillness.

PAGE 248 (5 panels)

Mood: Aftermath

Motif: Recognition by others

PANEL 1

Zoo keeper and a policeman approach.

PANEL 2

They stop—seeing something off-panel.

PANEL 3

Their expressions—grim, knowing.

PANEL 4

They move closer.

PANEL 5

We do not yet see what they see.

PAGE 249 (4 panels)

Mood: Final revelation

Motif: Identity resolved

PANEL 1

The panther lies dead.

PANEL 2

Nearby—
Irena's body.

PANEL 3

The blade (from Judd) is visible.

PANEL 4

The implication is clear.

PAGE 250 (closing page — 3 panels)

Mood: Completion / silence

Motif: The circle closes

PANEL 1

The empty cage.

Door open.

PANEL 2

The zoo at night—still.

PANEL 3 (final image — hold)

The same darkness as Page 1.

But now—

We know what lives inside it.

tone & visual language

This work blends psychological horror with noir visual language. Darkness is active, light exposes vulnerability, and transformation is never shown directly—only implied through shadow, sound, and consequence.

full synopsis

Irena Dubrovna lives in quiet isolation, sketching at the zoo and watching a black panther with unsettling intensity. She meets Oliver Reed, an easygoing designer who is drawn to her mystery. Their relationship grows, but Irena warns him that her past is not ordinary: in her homeland, she says, women who surrender to passion become beasts.

Oliver dismisses her fears as superstition and introduces her to his friend Alice, whose warmth and confidence contrast sharply with Irena's restraint. As Irena attempts to live a normal life, signs begin to accumulate that something is wrong. Animals recoil from her. A pet bird dies in her hands. She becomes increasingly convinced that her curse is real.

Despite this, Irena and Oliver marry—but on their wedding night, she cannot allow him to touch her. A scream from outside halts her at the threshold of intimacy. Their marriage becomes one of distance and quiet desperation.

Meanwhile, Oliver and Alice grow closer. Their connection is effortless, grounded, and human—everything Irena cannot be. As Irena senses herself losing both love and identity, strange occurrences escalate. Alice is stalked through empty streets by an unseen presence. At a swimming pool, something circles her in shadows and reflections, never fully visible but undeniably there.

Desperate, Oliver takes Irena to Dr. Judd, a psychiatrist who interprets her fears as repression and delusion. Under hypnosis, Irena reveals her inner world—one where desire and destruction are inseparable. Judd insists he can cure her.

But as Oliver drifts toward Alice, and Judd crosses professional boundaries, Irena's warnings go unheeded. When Judd attempts to assert control over her, he triggers the very transformation he denies. He is pursued—and killed—by something he cannot understand.

In the final movement, Irena returns to the zoo. She releases the panther and confronts it without fear. In a moment of quiet inevitability, she is killed—her identity and the creature's now indistinguishable—and the story ends in silence on an empty cage.